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Human Life:

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BACCALAUREATE ADDRESS

DELIVERED ON THE

SABBATH BEFORE COMMENCEMENT,

SEPTEMBER 15, 1850,

TO THE

SENIOR CLASS OF PENNSYLVANIA COLLEGE,

BY REV. C. P. KRAUTH, D. D.
President of Pennsylvania College.

GETTYSBURG:

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Pennsylvania College, September 16th, 1850.

TO REV. C. P. KRAUTH, D. D.

It is our agreeable duty, in behalf of the Senior Class, to solicit for publication a copy of the very interesting and instructive Baccalaureate Address, delivered before them yesterday morning.

Most respectfully, Yours, &c.

M. VALENTINE,
DANIEL GARVER,
SAMUEL YINGLING,
WM. J. CARROLL,
C. J. EHREHART.

Pennsylvania College, Gettysburg, Sept. 17th, 1850.

TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE

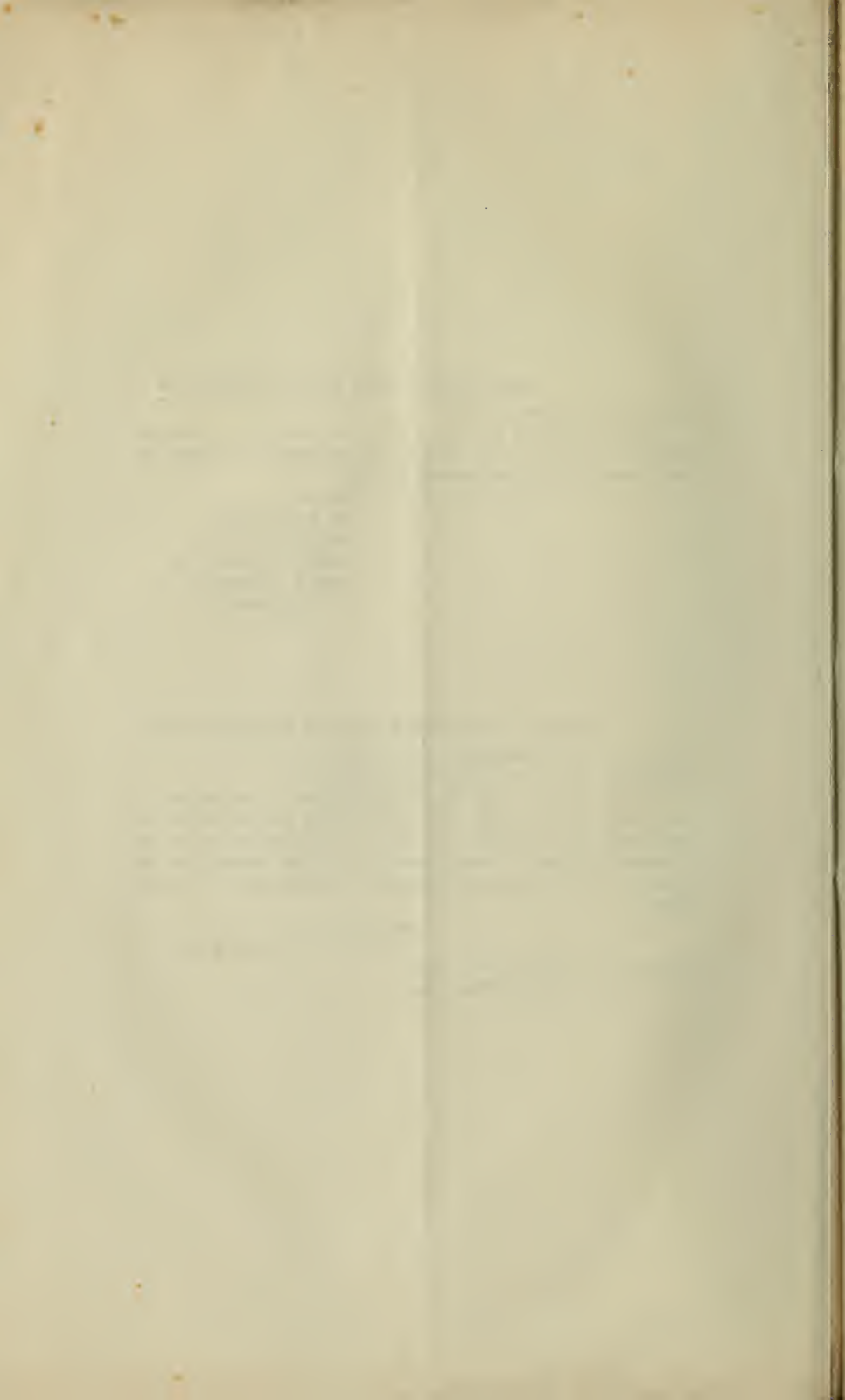
SENIOR CLASS OF PENNSYLVANIA COLLEGE:—

I have but one objection to complying with the request contained in your polite note of yesterday, and that is, that I do not consider the discourse deserving of publication. I cannot, however, obtain my own consent to decline the request of a class to which I feel so much attached, and will accordingly put the manuscript into the hands of your Committee at an early period.

Yours sincerely,

C. P. KRAUTH.

Messrs. VALENTINE, GARVER, YING-
LING, CARROLL & EHREHART.



ADDRESS.

Ephes. 6 : 11. *Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil.*

YOUNG GENTLEMEN OF THE SENIOR CLASS :

You have passed through the period of preparation for professional study, or efficient action in the world, an important stadium of your earthly existence. Thus far all has been well, creditable to you, and will be properly remunerated at a period near at hand. You will be crowned with the academic wreath, and be the observed of the observers. From this time, disengaging yourselves from the trammels of College life and its cloistered retirement, you will advance to a broader theatre, and commence to play a part of more significance and power. In a higher degree than heretofore, you will be your own masters, the shapers of your own destiny. Your task is increased, your responsibility enlarged, and the necessity is produced of a multiplication of your efforts. Now you are on the line, which passed, places you in a new region, and it is natural for you to look around to inspect it, and to see what it offers to you. Some of your fellow men have so long occupied this territory, and have made themselves so well acquainted with it, that you may gladly avail yourselves of the information they can give you and profit by their experience. I propose on the present occasion, being your Senior, to act in this capacity, and hope that you will attend to and heed the last instruction which you will receive from me in the relation still existing between us.

It is human life, in its distinctive features and its duties, to which your attention is invited. First, What is it? and second, How is it to be encountered—are the topics.

First, What is it? In describing it, and the mode by which it is to be encountered, I shall be guided by the passage selected as a text, and consider it as the march of a soldier with the accoutrements which are subservient to his purposes. It is not, I remark, a pleasant march over fertile territories, presenting every thing that we desire. It is not our design to indulge in a querulous strain, and to find fault with the great Creator. Far be such impiety from us! The world in which we live, though marred by the fall, and shorn of much of its pristine loveliness, and not to be described as an Eden and represented as presenting the spectacle of the wolf dwelling with the lamb, and the leopard lying down with the kid and the calf, and the young lion and the fawning together, and a little child leading them, and the cow and the bear feeding and their young ones lying down together, the lion eating straw like an ox; the suckling child playing on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child putting his hand on the cockatrice's den; no hurting or destroying in all God's holy mountain — and though properly described as groaning and travelling in pain altogether until now; made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same — still it is a beautiful world, it has numerous objects to delight the eye and regale the senses, innumerable aptitudes to operate pleasantly and beneficially upon man. It speaks loudly of the goodness of its former, and proclaims unceasingly the beneficence of its preserver, praises ever the love from whence it originated. It must be admitted that provision has been made, ample provision, by the munificence of God, for the happiness of man, and to deny that man has many and great enjoyments in life, is either to impugn the bounty of God, or to overrate the evils of man's apostacy. We have no sympathy with those croakers, who, commencing with the denial that earth is a paradise, conclude with characterizing it as a pandemonium. Human life, then, if the most be made of it, may be eminently happy. Many of its miseries are of our own creation, and though it is true that the race is not always to the swift or the battle to the strong, this I conceive is the excep-

tion and the contrary is the rule. The description, however, to be rendered just, must be accompanied with some abatement. If entering upon life we expect to march through it without witnessing any thing disagreeable, and encountering no trial; if, in other words, we expect that all will be smooth and equable, and no calamity come across our way, we are destined to be disappointed, and to find that afflictions, various in kind and differing in intensity, are allotted man. Such has been the experience of men in all ages and all circumstances—from the renowned sufferer of Idumea down to the last recorded experience of human life; it is of few days and full of trouble; oft a dreary waste and here and there an oasis to refresh and strengthen us. Such is not human existence as it appears to the young, perhaps to you, my young friends, fancy, hope, delusive hope paint it in different colors; you see before you a fairy scene, all the objects are delightful, they smile, they beckon you to come—but as the wise man more than intimates, when he teaches us to remember our Creator in the days of our youth, the evil days will come and those in which we shall say we have no pleasure in them.

If, then, you are not to indulge in morose, morbid feelings, and to expect nothing but calamity and woe, do not, on the other hand, think that pleasure and joy will attend your every step, and that your progress to eternity will be attended with unalloyed gratifications.

Human life is not an unopposed progress towards its great end. What is the great end of life? The attainment of a meetness for a blissful immortality. In other words, it is holiness, conformity to the law of God, assimilation to the moral perfections of God, imitating the virtues which adorned the life of the Son of God. It is the duty of every man, under the tuition of Jesus, to become prepared for eternal glory. Suppose such is our conviction—suppose we have entered upon the career, believers in Christ, and we must believe or we will perish—for he that believeth not shall be damned, nevertheless it will be necessary for us to move forward in the discipline of goodness, until, having undergone a sufficient probation and

brought to maturity our character, we are qualified for a higher sphere; until that time, it is to be remembered that our life will encounter opposition, the opposition of intelligence and great power, directed by wily agents, unwearied in their efforts to defeat our purposes. It is called, in the passage at the head of our remarks, the wiles of the Devil, and in the same connection we are informed, that we wrestle not, or carry on a contest with flesh and blood, but principalities, powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual wickedness in high places.

Opposition, then, will be made: 1st, by human agency—flesh and blood, our own and that of others. In life, man finds a foe in his own corrupt heart, and no less in the beings of the same nature with whom he is surrounded. He encounters a world hostile to godliness and meets foes from the spirit world highly intellectual, of great attainments, of skillful strategy, of indomitable perseverance and marked prowess. Singular as the constitution may appear to us, it is nevertheless real, that in the universe of God there are degraded beings, whose element is mischief—the foes of God, the foes of man, who looking with envy on man's happiness, and determined to defeat him in the pursuit of it, conspiring to ruin him and exerting great might to effect it, hover around and about to molest and to annoy, and availing themselves of every moment of security, watching every season of inaction, use it for the accomplishment of their bad ends. Such does the Bible teach us is man's condition, and there is much in human experience to sustain its declarations. This is the expectation that you are to form. Sometimes your enemy may stand in front of you, and challenge you to combat. He may display his horrid front and bid you defiance. He may summon all his terrors to throw a panic into your spirit, and send forth his lion roar that every fibre in you may quiver. At another time, his attack may be more insidious, in the flank, or in the rear, but none the less deadly. He may appear with a flag of truce, that he may take you by surprise, and effect an advantage over you. But by whatever means he aims to bring about his purpose and

effect your ruin, he cannot be concealed. His wiles are too well known to admit of much doubt. Carelessness alone can give him any vantage ground. He may seek to seduce you to the false, lure you to compromit the truth, but the father of lies stands revealed in your sight. He may seek to induce you to act unjustly and to trample on righteousness in your dealings with men, but the enemy of righteousness will not be hid. He may try to lull you into inactivity and paralyze your energies; but by unmistakable evidence you will discover the perverter of God's laws. He may attempt to throw doubt over the evidences of your faith, but the sophist and the perverter will not be concealed. He may aim to destroy your hope, and to infuse despair, but his misrepresentations will be glaring in the light of divine truth. He may revile the throne of God, as emanating no mercy, but your cherished experience will detect and expose the shallow artifice and its propagator. Expect, then, on the right and the left, from within and without, to experience influences subtile yet powerful, repressing your onward progress, your upward tendencies, the high, noble aspirations of your renovated nature, aiming to blight your highest, your most cherished hopes.

How few of us start in life with any such views; how few think that the foe, like a staunch murderer, steady to his purpose, will pursue us through every lane of life; will hang on and hurl his fiery darts—darts poisoned with a deadly venom, the inflamed wounds of which create great anguish and demand for their cure a most painful surgery. Remember then that if you are in the territories of the great King, those territories are in revolt, and though you may be loyal subjects and have no sympathy with rebellion, yet you live in the midst of it, and will feel its influence from day to day. For if you be good men and true, and you had better not be at all than to be any thing else—for it was said of one who occupied that position, that it would be well for him if he never had been born, and when he died a violent death that he went to his own place, you will be identified with God in the great contest he is carrying on with the enemies of light; his friends will be your

friends, his foes will be your foes, his victories will be yours, and in his glories you will share.

Strongly should the mind be impressed with the seriousness, the solemnity of life. It is not a frolic ; it is not sport ; it is not repose ; it is not, as we have laid down in the point we are treating, an unopposed progress. If it is not an unimportant position to be either constantly in sight of a powerful enemy, ready at every moment for battle, withholding his hands merely because you are on the alert, or to know that he is in ambush, in vast force, waiting till he can obtain a favorable opportunity to crush you ; so is it not, to be, as we are, marching under the Captain of salvation to another country, in the face of a foe of practiced skill, a tried warrior, a veteran Captain with well disciplined troops, who, though often defeated, has been flushed with victory in many an encounter.

The fact and the magnitude of this opposition the Bible sets before us and very amply, indeed, in the passages immediately connected with the text. It is true, and this is our great consolation, that mighty foe is doomed — he has been subdued in the great contest in which he engaged with the Son of God, his final overthrow is certain ; but yet he has strength for a little while, and during his day, he may and he will be the author of many sorrows.

I remark in regard to human life that it is not a sinecure. This would follow, as a matter of course, from what has been said. Deep solicitude, as to its result, and active efforts, are certainly appropriate. Levity is not suitable to beings who have such an existence as we have. Properly weighed, human life will appear to us an immense trust, and cannot but strike us as demanding serious enquiry how it may be made to fulfill its end. With deep solicitude that it may not be a curse, but a blessing to us — that it may conduce to human weal and to no man's sorrow — that God's glory may be promoted by it and all human beings pronounce it praise-worthy, should we turn to and salute it—address to it our energies and consecrate to it our talents, our attainments, whatever we have of physical power or moral force.

Before we pass to our second head, we recapitulate and say, Human life is a mixed scene, a cup in which, with a pleasant draught, there is bitterness intermingled; beset with difficulties and exposed to hostile incursions of wily foes, of deadly hate, a continual warfare, a never-decided contest; whilst it is prolonged, full of solemn, trying scenes, awaking thought, and stirring emotion powerfully within, summoning to action—the signal for the onset often falling on our ears. Such is life, not as painted in novels, not as pictured in the unsanctified muse, but as portrayed by the pencil of inspiration — as sketched in the word of God, as experienced by holy men whose memoirs are contained in our sacred books, and as realized by all wherever born, wherever living, in whatever condition either of elevation or depression.

How is life to be encountered? With an intelligent view of its nature and our capacity, it cannot but appear to us formidable, and we ought anxiously to enquire whether, in our own unaided strength, it must be met. The answer is not difficult. Life will be a failure, or in other words, it will not be successful; our enemies will triumph and we be discomfited, unless aid be afforded us superior to our own.—Strength we need, but that strength must be infused into us by supernatural power. We must be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. We must feel our own insufficiency and regard our sufficiency as of God, and turning to him, rely upon his power to uphold us. It is the greatest of errors and fatal to all our interests to presume on our own might; “Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.” Many have fallen because they placed undue reliance on themselves. Many will fall because turning away from God, they will be without strength in the time of trial. In our text, the experienced veteran in the Redeemer’s service, exhorts us, in view of the powerful adversaries arrayed against us, to put on the whole armor of God. The panoply we need is furnished by God; and it has efficiency the greatest; it is divinely efficacious. Not carnal but mighty are the weapons which we should wield. But what are they — what is

this panoply? There are various pieces all important, each performing a distinct service, the whole constituting an entire defence, and affording the means of aggressive agency of the most effective stamp. Examining each, we find first presented to us truth, the girdle of truth. This is to brace us up, and preserve our powers in due tone; to give them vigor, and enable them to act energetically. Truth, whether considered as knowledge residing in the understanding, whether pertaining to this or a future world, is essential to man in the execution of the task assigned him.

The love of truth, in its highest forms, is characteristic of a regenerated nature. Revealed truth should be sought by us as hid treasure, and should be garnered up in our hearts. It is our light in the path of life, our guide in our journey, our map in the enemies' territory, our directory in our spiritual campaign. Truth in our intercourse with men, the opposite of falsehood and insincerity—the communication of what we design and the performance of what we promise, can never be lost sight of without serious detriment to our moral good. It is the true man, the man who hates lying, falsehood, deception, who sweareth to his hurt and changeth not, that is strong and contending with the enemy, he contendeth with advantage. Righteousness is another part of this armor. It is the breastplate which we should wear. What is it? The love of justice, equity, reciprocity, veneration for the maxim: "as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them." It gives to every man his due. It withholds no just claim, it refuses the payment of no just debt. It exacts no unrewarded services. It claims no more than it allows. A righteous man walks by the law of his God, and makes that law the rule of his life, and in doing so, he feels that he has moral power, he is not weakened by the loss of confidence in his fellow-men, he is not debilitated by the reproaches of his own heart. An unrighteous man is weak; his breast is exposed, the enemy attacking him obtains an easy victory, but honest in his purposes, honest in his acts, devouring no widows' houses and taking no bread from the orphan, no man's oppressor, but

rather submitting to wrong that he may not do injury to others, he is powerfully defended against every hostile attack, and no weapon formed against him can prosper. He has a breast-plate wherewith he can quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

Another part of this armor is alacrity, readiness, quickness in action, the opposite of indolence, of delay, of procrastination, styled in the language of Paul : being shod or sandalled with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. It is certainly the design of our Maker that we should not pass our life in inactivity, or repose. Our own interests, the proper cultivation of our minds and hearts, the interests of others variously related to us, call upon us to have our powers stretched to the highest tension, and to exert ourselves in every prescribed direction with untiring zeal. Our motto should be, "always ready"; our feet should be prepared to move swiftly in the way of duty. Happiness in the future will much depend on the full use of all your privileges, on the proper application of all your resources, on the cultivation of habits of industry and prompt action. If the flesh rebel and ask for rest, the flesh must be and it can be conquered, and when once you have learned, and you have already made, I trust, respectable progress in this direction, you will find it easy, and the task will become a pleasure, and by a wonderful metamorphosis, the indolent body will become the impulsive agent in the efforts of life. I can safely recommend this as a powerful instrument in your onward progress; as a tried weapon against your sworn foe. An inactive army, an indolent soldier, and in the time of war — these are utterly inadmissible. Nothing but disaster and destruction await those who occupy the seat of war, and thus demean themselves.

So has it been, in many sad instances, with young men of fine talents and extensive attainments, of much promise, and whose brilliant opening career has attracted many hearts, and enlisted the sympathy of generous natures; they have, having run well for a season, permitted their energies to flag, have sat down exhausted before their work was fairly begun; they

have yielded to temptation, easily operative in the unemployed spirit, have given themselves to vice and dashed all the high hopes formed concerning them, and in a miserable and disgraced existence, or a premature grave, the drunkard's or the felon's, have become monuments to a cotemporary generation of the incalculable evils of unapplied energies. Consider time as a talent, a precious talent, rapidly passing from your grasp, a talent dealt out in no profuse quantity, sufficient for its purposes but nothing more. Consider life as hastening to its close, and your sun as destined speedily to go down, and thus, looking at the magnitude of the interests confided to you and the amplitude of your work, receive the conviction that you cannot loiter, you cannot step aside to gather flowers, you cannot lie down by the stream and in dreamy musings pass your hours; that you must not give to conviviality and gay associates your precious moments, and not neglect, by seeking to live in an ideal world, the duties which you owe to a real. The peace-bringing Gospel of Jesus teaches us thus to live, — teaches us thus to bring up our forces — teaches us thus to run the race set before us. Thus acted he who never became weary in well doing; who worked the works of him who sent him whilst it was day; thus acted He the Author of the book from which we have taken our text. He inculcates this; he calls upon us to be shod; he pressed forward in this spirit, till his martyred death transferred him to an eternal crown.

Next comes faith; and this is another important part of our armor. We may live without faith, that is, without belief in God; we may give ourselves up to that mental condition which the Psalmist represents in the language: "The fool hath said in his heart there is no God." We may theorize ourselves into the belief that there is no personal divinity, and in the spirit of Spinoza or Hegel, *et id omne genus*, consider the universe as God and ourselves a part of the Godhead.— We may maintain that man needs no revelation beyond the light of nature, and needing none he can claim no more, or that even if his wants render desirable some interposition of

God of a supernatural character, he has never condescended to afford it. We may persuade ourselves that with an intellect superior to that which has bowed in reverence before the Cross of Christ, we have ascertained that the religion of Jesus is a cunningly devised fable. These are positions that we may occupy, but if we do, we ought to count well the cost ; we ought to be entirely satisfied that we are not playing into the enemies' hand ; that we are not making most dangerous mistakes, and that we will not bitterly deplore our folly when it will be too late. Should the supposition be indulged that we advert to these things because we apprehend tendencies in this direction in your minds, we are able to correct the mistake. We entertain no fear of this nature. We believe you to be too well acquainted with the foundations of religion, natural and revealed — too well acquainted with the evidences of the divine existence and the truth of Christianity, to anticipate that you will be found any where in the life before you but on the side of God and his Christ, with unshaken confidence in God, with humble trust in Jesus. Faith is described by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, as the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. It is not only represented in the Scriptures as of indispensable necessity, as is evident if we admit the relations there presented to us to be real, but of mighty power in forcing up the soul to a proper culmination, in resisting the agencies employed against our happiness, in advancing us in our march to the celestial paradise. It brings the might of the upper world into our spirits ; it clothes us with divine power ; it enlists in our interests the highest and holiest agencies in the universe. It forms not only a defence, but an offensive instrument of potent efficacy. He who lives under the influence of faith in the Son of God, and the unseen realities of the eternal world as revealed in the Bible, may be said to have a charmed life. He is safe. Dangers may fly thick around. Enemies may beset his path on one side and another ; fiery darts may be projected, but all will be fruitless. Secure in his defence he may pass through the waters, and they shall not overflow him,

through the fires and he shall not be burnt. Seeing him that is invisible, he can endure. He carries with him a principle which has wrought many wonders; it has subdued kingdoms, it has wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouth of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness was made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. By it women received their dead raised to life again, and others were tortured not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Nothing has accomplished so much and so illustriously as this. No glory transcends or equals theirs who are chronicled in the pages of faith's history. No worthies can the world show like those heroes, who, with a strong trust in God, went forth to battle against the ills of life and to lay hold on eternity. The world was not worthy of such men. They have purchased for themselves a good degree; they inscribed their names in the book of life, and all generations will call them blessed.

Much might be said of the utility of this principle, of the altered aspect it gives to every thing about us and all our relations; of the revolution it effects within us; of the elevation and dignity it gives to our sentiments; of the emotions, pure and benevolent which it cherishes in the soul; of the power it displays in the afflictions of life, and the moral energy which accompanies it in every case. And what shall I say more? for the time would fail me to tell of the beauty and power of faith and to trace it in its walk of light and love and purity. I remit you to its records in the Scriptures. I remit you to the eulogium contained in the Pauline epistle to the Hebrews, merely adding, that by it the Elders obtained a good report; without it, it is impossible to please God; and that if we would come to God, we must believe that he is and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Another piece of this armor is the helmet of salvation. Something to guard the very seat of vitality. It might be called the hope of future salvation; a powerful principle in animating conflict. How paralyzing fear, how inspiring hope!

The army that contends with depressed spirits is almost defeated by its own emotions; but hope of success, swelling into assurance of victory, quickens into activity every power and excites an enthusiasm which will hardly admit of defeat.—Most true is this, when fired with hope we contend with those who are disheartened by apprehension. Thus do *we* contend. Our enemies have small assurance compared with ours. They may succeed, but it can only be because we are indisposed to triumph. But this helmet of salvation—this safeguard of the seat of life, may be a strong persuasion, based on the promises of God properly appropriated, that we are his adopted sons and heirs of his kingdom. You go forth, then, endorsed by God in your heart of hearts, with his powerful witness in your souls, his spirit testifying with yours that you are his; it requires no great power of deduction to determine that we are well armed, that, with such a weapon, we can push on our way, and nought can hinder, we can overcome enemies and none can stand before us, triumph over devils, unallured by their wiles. What more powerful than this? What more desirable? With it our courage will never falter; our arm will ever be strong enough to enable us to wield that other instrument prepared for us by God—the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. This constitutes our war cry, the pæan that we sing when we rush to the battle—it strikes terror into the foe. He cannot stand before it. Well versed in the word of God, prepared by the light of heaven to expose the darkness of hell, by the truth of God, the lies of the Devil; with promises and threatenings all powerful, we need but that grace, which is given in answer to prayer, to go forth invulnerable to certain and joyful victory.

This, then, is the panoply which God has provided for us. This are we to use. With this are we to withstand in the evil day—to be firm—to meet the onset and to push on; with this, having used it well, will we be able to stand—covered with glory, crowned with victory. Put on this armor, wear it well and use it truly, and then will you have encountered life, like men, and having encountered it thus, you will have your

reward; it will be given you in part in this world, but in an incomparably higher degree in another, after you have fought the good fight, finished your course and kept the faith; and that reward will be a crown—a crown of glory, unfading, eternal.

YOUNG GENTLEMEN :

Your life and duty are before you. Entering the ranks, you understand what is expected of you by your leader. You know what powerful considerations urge you to fidelity. Your labor will not be in vain, if properly directed. The prize is a great one, and success is certain, if you desire it and submit to the guidance of God. I may say, you enter upon your work under most favorable auspices. You have enjoyed great advantages. I will say more—you have not enjoyed them in vain. Favored of your Maker, favored by Providence, nurtured in the bosom of literature and religion, you appear exciting high hopes and prepared for an elevated destiny.

I hope that no one of you will be a deserter; that you will never leave the banner of religion and science under which you have enlisted. I trust that your post will always find you at it, ready to attack or repel; in the thickest of the fight you will be there, and when the spoil is divided, yours will be an honorable share.

I feel assured that your position will not be characterized by the epithet laggard, that you will be industrious and persevering, that you will give all diligence to accomplish the great ends of life, and above every thing else to make your calling and election sure. You will feel that you have here no abiding city, and act as pilgrims and strangers on the earth. Sympathizing with human wretchedness, whether physical or mental, we expect you to be ready to succor and industrious in the relief of human woe.

Be it then, young gentlemen, your ambition to fight the good fight, to lay hold on eternal life, and wherever you may be and whithersoever you may go, be assured that you carry

along with you the affection and interest of your teachers, and that none will be more ready, not your most cherished friends, than they, to rejoice when you rejoice, and to weep when you weep.

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